

# my child

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17

PAGES OF  
CHRISTMAS

shopping

Keeping the  
romance  
in your  
marriage

5 TIPS

TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD  
FOR A NEW BABY

RUNNING  
WHILST  
PREGNANT

WAYS TO  
ENCOURAGE  
GOOD TODDLER  
BEHAVIOUR

MOVIE NIGHT

*Our pick of the best xmas movies*

ISSUE 51 - DECEMBER 2015





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Fold  
my  
Car!



Fold  
my  
Robot!





# Wipe away without the tears

When a little one gets gunky stuff in their eyes or an eye infection, nothing can seem worse than having to wipe their eyes clean.

Little Eyes® wipes provide a gentle, convenient way to clean and refresh your baby's eyelids and lashes. The soft, absorbent wipes have been specially designed to remove mucus and crusty residue easily.

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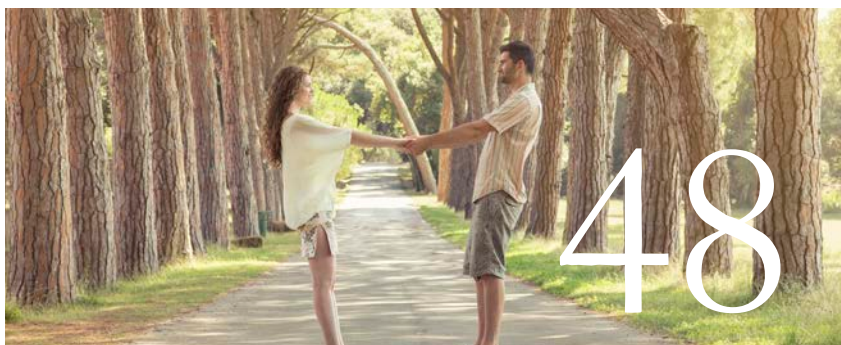


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# my child

## EDITOR IN CHIEF

BEAU MEDINA

## DEPUTY EDITOR

ANNA DIXON

## ART DIRECTOR

ANNA DIXON

## ASSISTANT EDITOR

SHARRY FOUROTAN

ANDJA CURCIC

## SALES DIRECTOR

BIANCA MEDINA

## CONTRIBUTING EXPERTS

LUKE DENHAM

ISABELLE BAHRAIN

## EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES

EDITORIAL@MYCHILDMAGAZINE.COM.AU

## ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES

ADVERTISE@MYCHILDMAGAZINE.COM.AU

## CONTACT:

CRE8 PUBLICATIONS

PHONE: 0406 295 555

8 GROSE ST, PARRAMATTA, NSW 2150

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# BABYBJÖRN®



**NEW! Baby Carrier One**  
The ultimate ergonomic edition  
[www.babybjorn.com.au](http://www.babybjorn.com.au)

The Parallel Line Design is a sign of a genuine BABYBJÖRN product.



## EDITOR'S LETTER



**This month at My Child Magazine** we are blending the new and the old! As you can see on this very page, we've kick-started our fresh new layout. Our Art Director Anna Dixon has been working tirelessly to revamp the design and create a contemporary look for the magazine. We've made things cleaner and simpler. While we do strive to bring you the best content, we also want to make our content look good! This month's issue is just a taste of what's to come in 2016. We are well on our way developing exciting content for next year's re-launch. We can't wait to show you what we have in store. This month's issue is brimming with tips – from tips for choosing the perfect toy, dealing with toddlers, and adjusting to your new bub. We've also got some great features this month – an informative piece about running and pregnancy, and a personal article about sustaining romance in a marriage after having kids. There's a great selection of kid-friendly, delicious recipes and a crop of the best Christmas movies to watch these holidays! We hope you enjoy all that this issue has to offer!



*Beau x*



# editor PICKS

A FEW OF MY FAVOURITE PIECES



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** WHALE TIMBER TABLE LAMP **\$108.90** [indie.com.au](http://indie.com.au), HANDPAINTED XMAS BALLS **\$14.95** [oxfamshop.org.au](http://oxfamshop.org.au), LINEN & FEATHER CUSHION **\$95.00** [indie.com.au](http://indie.com.au), BETTY - KOZIOL STAND **\$39.95** [optocoonline.com](http://optocoonline.com), WATERMELON PLACEMATS **\$16.95** [emporiumhome.com.au](http://emporiumhome.com.au), ROSE PAVILION TENT **\$589.00** [downthatlittlanelane.com.au](http://downthatlittlanelane.com.au), MAGGIE'S KITCHEN COOKBOOK **\$59.95** [maggiebeer.com.au](http://maggiebeer.com.au), SUNNY JIM SUNSHADE WITH YOGA BAG **\$149.95** [sunnyjim.com.au](http://sunnyjim.com.au), MASON 500ML DRINKING JAR **\$14.00** [downthatlittlanelane.com.au](http://downthatlittlanelane.com.au), HANGING CHAIR WITH CUSHION **\$119.95** [thetoucanshop.com](http://thetoucanshop.com), ELLIE COT IN ROSE GOLD **\$899.00** [cranmorehome.com.au](http://cranmorehome.com.au)



A baby's nursery with a light blue wall. Three wooden shelves with yellow, green, and red interiors hold various toys and books. A white crib with vertical slats contains a baby wrapped in a white blanket. To the right is a white clock with a round face. In the foreground, a white rabbit figurine sits next to two wrapped gifts on a wooden floor.

# ISABELLE *Bahrain*

WE CHAT TO APAC BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR FOR PEEK-A-BOO GROUP ISABELLE BAHRAIN ABOUT THE WORK HER COMPANY DOES.



### **What is your role in the business?**

APAC Business Development Director for Peek-a-Boo Group. Peek-a-Boo group is formed of 2 companies

- Red Castle - creator of the Cocoonababy and
- Beaba - creator of the Babycook.

My role was initially with BEABA and then Cocoonababy when we acquired Red Castle.

I have worked for Peek-a-Boo for 11 years and spearheaded the international development of the group.

### **What was the inspiration behind the business?**

Peek-a-Boo's inspiration lies behind truly unique and beneficial products to serve parents' needs. Our philosophy is to bring real valuable solutions to parents with style and comfort.

Red Castle was created in 1992 with the concept of developing technical innovations in baby products. As well as proposing a very chic and traditional touch in the application and design, Red Castle caters and leads the way for the needs of modern parents who are concerned about both efficient ergonomics and design.

Red Castle is therefore centred on serving parents' needs to help the family bond. To this effect, Cocoonababy is a great example of a product creating a favourable environment to ease a new family into their new life with a new baby.

### **What products do you offer?**

The Peek-a-Boo Group offers truly unique innovative products which have been internally designed, created and patented. Additionally, Red Castle has developed numerous products such as 3 wheelers, summer and winter textile products etc.... However, the most outstanding product in our range is the highly acclaimed award-winning

Cocoonababy.

Cocoonababy is an ergonomically designed nest to help aid a baby's sleep - either day or night. The initial concept behind this product originated from a product developed in hospitals for premature babies. For many years, babies, born prematurely in prenatal units in France, were installed in "made to measure" nest-type cocoon designed in such a way as to recreate the same sensations as in their mother's womb.

In 1995, Mrs... Danièle Salducci, a paediatric physiotherapist, began working on a baby nest/cocoon in which the child was laid in a semi-fetal curved posture, a position medically proven to be beneficial to a baby with regards to his sleep, comfort and well-being. In 1997, she started a R&D partnership with the neonatal unit in the North Hospital in Marseilles, France, adapting the product to the requirements of premature babies and taking into account the constraints of using such a product in a hospital environment.

In 2000, the medical team realized that the benefits gained by premature babies correctly positioned in these initial cocoons could also be applied to babies born full-term and that the use should be extended. In 2006 : following 10 years R&D on the creation of a product for medical use or use in the home, a partnership between Mrs... Salducci and RED CASTLE led to the Cocoonababy® cocoon being developed on a large scale for use at home. Since then the home use has been consistently growing thanks to parents' good understanding of the concept and the highly renowned benefit on babies' sleep.





“

*In the baby Industry,  
at the end of the day  
pleasing parents is  
all that matters.*

”

Peek-a-Boo Group since 2011, when it started its international expansion. It is the Cocoonababy that has triggered the strong development that RED CASTLE has experienced recently. As a unique and professional product, it has convinced many mum's concerned about their newborn's sleeping comfort.

For BEABA, it has existed since 1989 with the patented worldwide renowned BABYCOOK, first of a kind, steamer blender to cook healthy food for baby.

#### Can you tell me about the team?

Peek-a-Boo has a fantastic international team. The original team consisted of 12 people 11 years ago. The business has successfully grown and evolved to now employ a team of 150 people around the world with 4 subsidiaries covering all continents!

Peek-a-Boo has a proud international team located worldwide that delivers complete understanding of parental needs and also retailers' requirements from around the globe.

Peek-a-Boo has subsidiaries in Spain, UK, HK and USA and many other countries have local representation.

Our reactivity to the market comes from a good balance of skills and expertise in the technical domain, marketing expertise, on-the-ground knowledge, sales etc.... In addition to this, we have a relatively young team which helps drive innovation and ensures that we are always ahead of the game

in trends and consumer insights, for example, matching our ideas with that of an active trendy mother.

Peek-a-Boo also has its own internal designer and product managers who, coupled with outside creativity and tailored against products we are targeting, are able to partner the appropriate skills to propose the best solution to parents. For example, with the Cocoonababy and its series of evolutions, Peek-a-Boo has maintained its Partnership with Daniele Salducci, paediatric physiotherapist. This enables us to respect baby's needs and support our product creation which positions newborns in the appropriate comfortable posture for its development stage.

#### How long has the business been operating?

Red Castle was founded in 1992 and has been owned by

In the last 10 years, the Group has grown internationally to support more parents' needs, multiplying its turnover by 5!

#### What has been the most challenging aspect of setting up the business?

Well, there are many challenging aspects in the business. However I believe when a business is built on good unique ideas, with much personal involvement, it is very challenging when you start to see copycat or fake products developing and spreading through the markets. At the same time, it is very rewarding for the brand as it shows how good the idea was! The answer is you just have to keep on innovating to remain the leader and stay a length ahead!!

I would add, it is also challenging to motivate and support an international development with partners from different cultures whilst far from our homeland.

We follow our French company's identity, while soaking in local cultures and expectations. We are glad we made the right choice, selecting the adequate partners in each country, able to mix them in a successful formula!

#### **What do you enjoy most about the business?**

Sharing small and large successes with the team when we open a new market, having first positive feedbacks from local parents, and sharing these new experiences with the French team! We have so much pleasure in knowing our Cocoonababy is bringing more well-being around the world and that mum's trust us to take care of their little ones. It is a 100% made in France product so we have our little pride in that.

In the baby Industry, at the end of the day pleasing parents is all that matters.

I would also comment that we have great satisfaction during baby

Trade Fairs to have our customers visit and ask us about our new items as they are expecting them! When the industry is happy to work with your brand and the consumer shows you that your products fulfil a real need, it is an incentive for the whole team.

To witness our brand recognition for its always renewed innovation is rewarding for the brand and our R&D teams! You totally have to believe in products you bring to a market, however, outside recognition is even better!

#### **How is your business different to other similar businesses?**

Well, I would say unique products again... we are not promoting any ODM product from the shelves and only work with our patents, designs and innovations. This is what makes our vibe different from other businesses, I guess, and also the personal involvement of each employee in the company. All these partnerships, created with medical partners, out sourced

designers and creative brains, contribute to our pride to maintain our singularity.

#### **What gives your product the edge?**

Well, for all the reasons I explained before I guess. Because we are creators of useful innovative products able to resolve true parents' needs, and make their lives easier! We also have long term partnerships with our suppliers and it is a very important point to preserve our high-quality standards. Suppliers are also part of the development process to guarantee we all comply with the PAB requirements of standards, quality and functionalities! The selection and good partnerships with our subcontractors and suppliers is the key to maintaining a quality product that gives full satisfaction to parents. We make a promise to our consumers and we intend to keep it!

Cocoonababy, for example, has the ability to improve baby's comfort and provides quality sleep by





recreating a semi-fetal position. Thanks to its well-studied and excellent manufacturing shape and foam, it also avoids flat head, limits reflux and colic and avoids startle reflex. Reducing these physiological and physical problems and positioning the baby in the most favourable posture, reduces anxiety and vastly improves baby's quality sleep. Baby sleeps and eats better, parents sleep better and both bond better.

For all our brands and products, we promote a baby / parent bonding aspect. Family bonding is not always easy when everything turns into a headache and becomes complicated at home with the arrival of a baby.

Our solutions ease Parents' and Baby's bonding at a key stage from 0 to 2 years. We want them to spend quality time together! With, for instance, the Babycook... why spend 30 minutes to 1 hour preparing home-made healthy food when the Babycook can make it in 15 min with no supervision needed and no complicated handling! Parents can spend the extra time saved playing or bathing baby, much more interesting to bond with baby!

**What are your plans for the future of the business?**

We plan to extend our Sleep Solution and Feeding Solutions which are essential for a good

start in life. We also want these 2 areas to remain stylish so we will reinforce our partnership with independent designers, able to bring outside contribution to our singularity. Additionally, the company is developing more digital tools to support parents such as recipe-accessible Apps etc....

**Is there anything else you'd like My Child readers to know?**

We are more and more available in Australia and are working with our Australian partner towards being available nationally. We hope to bring our contemporary solutions to all Australian Mum's and be part of their family!



**BÉABA®**

**DOES YOUR SON HAVE  
TROUBLE FOCUSING?**

**IS HE EASILY DISTRACTED?**

**DOES HE HAVE PROBLEMS  
WITH INATTENTION OR  
HYPERACTIVITY?**

---

**Enrol your son into a new study with a  
natural medicine**

---

The effects of CDRI 08® (a special extract of Bacopa) on children and adolescents with inattention and hyperactivity.

This trial is being conducted at Swinburne University and is examining whether a specific extract of the herb Bacopa monnieri (CDRI 08®) can improve cognitive, mood, sleep and behavioural measures in boys aged 6-14 years with symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity.

KeenMind®, containing CDRI 08®, has been researched for over a decade in Australian clinical trials undertaken by Swinburne University, and has been assisting the memory, recall and concentration of Australians for over a decade.

Study participants will be given KeenMind® or placebo and sit tests measuring their IQ, memory, attention, reaction time, inhibition and behaviour.

Parents will receive a report summarising some of their child's test results.

For more information about how to enrol your son into the trial or about KeenMind®

**Visit [www.inattentiontrial.com](http://www.inattentiontrial.com)  
or call (03) 9214 4444**



*Study Trial No.: ACTRN12612000827831*





TODDLER



# THE *Toddler* TANTRUM

THE CLASSIC SCENARIO OF THE TODDLER TANTRUM.  
I'M SURE WE'VE ALL SEEN IT... THE SCREAMING CHILD, THE FRAZZLED PARENT, THE  
DISGRUNTLED PLANE PASSENGERS OR SUPERMARKET SHOPPERS.  
HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO TRY NEXT TIME YOUR WEE ONE REFUSES TO CO-OPERATE.













---

## FIND A DISTRACTION

The age old technique is using something to make your child oblivious to the fact that they are being put into their car seat or high chair. You will need pre-planning with this one, so if tantrums in certain situations have become normal then give them a distraction before you move them into that situation. It isn't always 100% effective, but it can make the tantrum a little more bearable. Try their favourite song, or a soft toy.

## LIKE A FISH TO A HOOK - USE BAIT.

Using a toy that your child has a love and fascination with in tricky situations when they just won't be quiet is always a good strategy. Like a fish to a hook, use the toy almost as bait. Lure them into the situation with it, such as getting into their stroller. It will have no effect if you give it to them in the middle of a tantrum. Give it to them once they're settled into where they are supposed to be.

## MAKE A PROBLEM

If you have a little bit of time up your sleeve, this may be a good idea. Simply invent a rule that means your toddler has to do something before something

else can happen. They don't know that the car won't move unless he sits still, or buckles his seat belt. Over exaggerate the problem and your child will be happy to see the situation move forward. You could try "Uh oh, the car won't start until your seat belt's buckled."

## OCCUPY HIS HANDS AND MIND

Regardless of where you are, there will always be something you can grab to occupy and amuse your grizzly toddler for long enough to make sure you finish what you want to. If it's the supermarket, try offering them a bread roll or something tasty like fruit snack bars. If nothing is at hand, a set of keys have the same effect that shiny silver does to a magpie.

## GRIN AND BEAR IT

It may seem impossible, but sometimes the only way to control your stubborn toddler is to try to ignore your toddler's howls of protest. If you're in the car, open the window, put on some music and hope they will tire themselves out before you get to your destination.



THE

DADDY





g







# THE WARNING

BLOGGER **LUKE DENHAM**

IS A SINGLE FATHER DRAWING FROM HIS OWN EXPERIENCE AND WRITES HIS BLOG NOT JUST FOR SINGLE PARENTS OR FATHERS BUT FOR ALL PARENTS.

---

We all know what it's like to be unceremoniously ripped out of a party when you feel the fun is just about to begin. Someone yells from the doorway that the taxi's arrived and it's time to go. We don't have time for goodbyes, we don't have time to thank our hosts, we don't have time to drink that last drink. We just grab whatever we can remember we brought along and leave. We generally feel a little grumpy at this point. Now, imagine you are a child and a parent comes into your wonderful fantasy world that you and the other kids have spent hours creating and you're told, "We're leaving." This can lead to serious disappointment and major meltdowns ... to say the least.

This scenario is all too common and one that I have witnessed time and time again. Children bursting into tears and tantrums when they are told they're leaving. It is a situation that can easily be avoided. All it takes is a little prior information and a 5 minute warning. If we inform our children before we get to the party that they will be warned when it is time to go, it's stored in their memory banks. If we come into their party space and with a quiet word into their ear say, "We'll be leaving in 5 minutes." Generally, the child will nod (with a minor pout perhaps), carry on playing and when the time comes to leave they will accept it without question. They will feel like that they have been aware of the situation and what is expected of them. It isn't a shock to their system and they have been given every opportunity to get their minds around what is happening.

This can be a release from serious blow ups as you're walking out the door and prying your child's fingers off the nearest handhold. The uncomfortable forced smiles whilst you're boiling with anger inside and the listening to

pitiful pleasantries from other parents whose children weren't so invested in the game they were just playing. Leaving parties or other gatherings is generally our choice as we are more aware of the other 5000 things that need to be done. The child is aware of fun and fun and fun. We have a choice to inform our children of many things and leaving social gatherings is one simple way of avoiding an embarrassing situation. Thanking someone for their beautiful party is quite difficult if you have a blubbing mess contorted around your legs. It may come across as lacking in sincerity for some reason. We all like to be proud of our children - sometimes

*"We're leaving." This can lead to serious disappointment and major meltdowns ... to say the least.*

a little too much so. We all look at other children's behaviour and offer our critique. We all want our children to be content and happy people. Each time we go to a party, a family outing, a fete, a movie, anywhere involving lots of bright lights, sugar and sparkly things we should always warn our child before and during the event of the time and behaviour expected when you are about to leave. It can save a lot of pain and anguish. Informed humans tend to act more rationally and children are our best humans.



# baby & Toddler

## Make My Day - Baby Bib

*Look stylish while it catches food and splatters*

Wonderfully soft, the Baby Bib can be used over and over again and still look great! Made of 100% food-grade BPA free silicone, these stylish bibs are also extremely functional. All styles are stain resistant, dishwasher safe and have a built in crumb catcher. The baby bib has an adjustable strap that fits sizes 6 months to 3 years old.

**\$29.95 - AVAILABLE FROM  
WWW.BUBBALOVE.COM.AU**



## Urban Glide from Thule

*The all terrain Stroller*

The Thule Urban Glide is an all-round sports stroller for the active family. The sleek and lightweight design makes it perfect for jogging on your favourite path and as an everyday stroller. Its Swedish style, quality and functionality will be the envy of Mums and Dads wherever you go.

Weighing in at just 10.5 kg, the Urban Glide is one of the lightest all-terrain sport strollers available. Precision engineering and a robust aluminium frame ensures the Urban Glide can handle the toughest conditions, keeping you and your child safe.

**\$749.00 - AVAILABLE NATIONALLY AT  
BABY BUNTING, BABIES R US AND LEADING  
INDEPENDENT RETAILERS**





## Cocoonababy

### *Baby in a Cocoon*

Welcoming a baby gently into the world, providing a comforting, reassuring, well-defined space, which reminds the baby of its mother's womb, the Cocoonababy® helps the newborn adapt as best as possible to life following birth. The semi-foetal position, in which baby is as if contained and in a slightly curved posture, soothes and reassures the baby. It helps reduce the appearance of common adaptation discomforts which can bother baby during the first months and encourages all-round development.

**\$299.00 - AVAILABLE FROM  
WWW.COCOONABABY.COM.AU**

PRODUCTS  
WE LOVE



## CuddleDry Toddler Swim Poncho

### *Cuddle Swim*

Keep your baby warm and dry after swimming with this supersoft bamboo/cotton towel, designed with baby swimming professionals. They contain bamboo fibre - silky soft, 60% more absorbent than pure cotton, with a natural antibacterial quality. The cosy hood helps to dry their hair and keep warmth in. Can be used from walking age to 3 years.

**\$64.95 - AVAILABLE FROM BABIES R US**



## Belly Armor

### *Protect your unborn Baby*

Founded in New York, Belly Armor is the leading anti radiation brand in the U.S. Designed for the modern, active mother, Belly Armor products enable her to protect her baby within, effortlessly and stylishly. The baby soft cotton is machine washable, light weight and high quality.

**\$139.00 FROM  
WWW.IVYLACEGIFTS.COM.AU**

register  
**NOW**



## CALLING ALL BUSINESSES!

---

We are excited to announce that we are calling for entries for our *My Child* Excellence Awards 2016. Now in their fifth year, these reader-voted awards recognise market-leading products, fashion labels and stores in the pregnancy, baby and children's categories. Celebrating Australian and New Zealand businesses, they offer a fantastic opportunity for companies – no matter whether big brands or small businesses – to showcase their achievements.

### VOTING

Readers will be offered the opportunity to vote on the entries by way of a "Shopping Guide" that will run in the March 2016 issue of *My Child*. The shopping guide will also be promoted via the *My Child* site, newsletters and social media pages.

### WINNERS

Gold, Silver and Bronze winners for each category, along with the overall winner, will be decided by the highest number of votes and will be announced in *My Child*'s June 2015 issue. Winners will also receive an awards badge and the right to display this on their marketing material.

### ELIGIBILITY

For companies to be eligible to enter, their products must be available in Australia and/or New Zealand at September 23 2015 and for the duration of the Awards. Please note that only manufacturers and distributors may register products – not retailers.



# categories

---

## OUT & ABOUT

Favourite Pram  
Favourite Stroller  
Favourite Baby Carrier  
Favourite Portable Chair/Booster Seat  
Favourite Baby Travel Product  
Favourite Baby Travel Cot  
Favourite Children's Travel Product

## NURSERY

Favourite Cot  
Favourite Change Table

## BREAST FEEDING

Favourite Breast Pump  
Favourite Breast feeding Product

## FEEDING

Favourite Highchair  
Favourite Baby Bottle  
Favourite Baby Feeding Product  
Favourite Baby Feeding Utensil  
Favourite Baby Cup  
Favourite Baby Food Storage Product

## BABY CARE

Favourite Teething Product  
Favourite Baby Hair care Product  
Favourite Baby Skincare Product  
Favourite Baby Bath Wash  
Favourite Baby Bath Product

## BABY CARE cont.

Favourite Baby Wipes  
Favourite Nappy Brand  
Favourite Nappy Rash Product  
Favourite Toilet-Training Product  
Favourite Baby Safety Product  
Favourite Health Product  
Favourite Baby Thermometer  
Favourite Baby Care Product

## SLEEP

Favourite Swaddle/Wrap  
Favourite Sleeping Bag  
Favourite Baby Sleep Aid

## MUMS

Favourite Nappy Bag  
Favourite Mum's Product

## TOYS

Favourite Baby Toy (0-18 months)  
Favourite Children's Toy (18-36 months)  
Favourite Educational Product

## FASHION

Favourite Baby Fashion Label  
Favourite Children's Fashion Label

## ONLINE STORES

Favourite Fashion Online Store

*TO ENTER: Entries must be registered by means of the online entry form available on the My Child site at [mychildmagazine.com.au](http://mychildmagazine.com.au). Simply click on the My Child Excellence Awards banner on the home page and then follow the instructions. Registration costs \$40 for each individual entry and must be paid by Paypal at registration. Registration closes at midnight AEST on Friday December 19 2015*





# DS fashion



SHOPPING





### BABY

### GIRLS

UNDER  
\$25



Dress and Bloomer Set  
\$25.00 rrp  
TARGET.COM.AU



Sequin Spot Tee  
\$12.00 rrp  
Twill Shorts  
\$15.00 rrp  
Canvas Shoes  
\$10.00 rrp  
TARGET.COM.AU

UNDER  
\$50



Frippy Spot Set  
\$34.99 rrp  
PUMPKINPATCH.COM.AU



Anglaise Jumpsuit  
\$39.99 rrp  
Flower Jelly Sandal  
\$24.99 rrp  
PUMPKINPATCH.COM.AU

SPLURGE



Enfant by Collette Dinnagan  
\$119.00 rrp  
DAVIDJONES.COM.AU



Zimmerman  
Drawstring Dress  
\$95.00 rrp  
Clarks Holly Sandal  
\$89.95 rrp  
DAVIDJONES.COM.AU

### BABY

### BOYS

UNDER  
\$25



Overall and T-shirt Set  
\$25.00 rrp  
TARGET.COM.AU



Spliced Pocket Tee  
\$10.00 rrp  
Chino Shorts  
\$15.00 rrp  
Canvas Shoes  
\$20.00 rrp  
TARGET.COM.AU

UNDER  
\$50



Bow Tie All in One  
\$29.99 rrp  
PUMPKINPATCH.COM.AU



Aiden Check Shirt  
\$29.99 rrp  
Mason Cargo Shorts  
\$34.99 rrp  
Boys Global Sneaker  
\$36.99 rrp  
PUMPKINPATCH.COM.AU

SPLURGE



Hugo Boss Short All In One  
\$119.00 rrp  
DAVIDJONES.COM.AU



Armani Jr Polo  
\$109.95 rrp  
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SHOPPING



HOW  
TO  
*Choose*  
THE PERFECT  
TOYS

TOYS AND GAMES FOR KIDS – HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S BEST? FINDING TOYS THAT YOUR CHILD WILL ENJOY AND LEARN FROM IS ABOUT UNDERSTANDING WHICH PLAY IDEAS SUIT WHICH AGE. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER THE TOYS ARE HAND-MADE, PRE-LOVED, 'EDUCATIONAL' OR EXPENSIVE.







## NEWBORN TOYS AND GAMES

You're the best 'toy' for your newborn. Your child will delight in watching your face, listening to your voice and simply being with you. Watch your baby as you play. If it looks like she's tired, overwhelmed or needs some down time, it's time to take a break.

As your baby grows, he'll enjoy looking at a brightly coloured mobile, listening to a wind-up musical toy or learning to reach for a rattle.

Toys with contrasting colours such as red, black and white are most interesting to newborns. Your baby will also enjoy toys with faces or with patterns such as curves or checks.

Keep in mind that newborns can't focus on objects more than about 20-30 cm from their faces.

## TOYS AND GAMES FOR BABIES AND TODDLERS

### AROUND YOUR HOME

Your baby or toddler will probably enjoy playing with push-along toys, soft balls, cuddly teddies, board or cloth books that can't be ripped, toy cars and trucks, blocks (building them up and knocking them down again), and a bucket and spade for the sandpit.

Surprise toys such as a jack-in-the-box and other cause-and-effect toys are fun from around 10 months on. The initial surprise might upset some children, so introduce these toys gently.

Simple puzzles, ride-on toys, and picture books with fun rhymes and bright illustrations are likely to fascinate your toddler.



## PRESCHOOLER TOYS AND GAMES

### INDOORS

Your preschooler is likely to enjoy that can be used for play-acting, such as a toy tool box, old mobile phone or dress-up clothes. Cardboard boxes can be turned into lots of things, including a toy stove, letter box, car or boat.

Try arts and crafts such as paints, crayons, pencils or cutting and pasting, or spend



some quiet time reading books together or listening to stories.

## OUTDOORS

Outdoor equipment – such as a tricycle, cubbyhouse, sandpit or swings (with an adult nearby) – will keep your preschooler busy and active. Balls are fun to throw, hit or kick.

Simple board games and puzzles, toy animals, toy cars, dolls and construction toys such as Lego are all fun. Keep a balance between toys that need a solution, such as jigsaw puzzles, and open-ended toys that stimulate your child's imagination.







BABY



FIRST

Soundly

WHEN BABIES START TALKING, THEY TEND TO HAVE A RAPT AUDIENCE: THERE'S NOTHING FUNNIER OR MORE ADORABLE THAN A BABY LEARNING HOW TO MAKE HER FIRST SOUNDS.



Wait — what was that noise that just came from your baby? It wasn't a wail... or a burp... or an explosion from her back end (did you begin to think that was all you'd ever hear from her?). The incredible sound you may have just heard is, in fact, a coo!

Your little genius will learn to talk in stages, beginning with vowel sounds, sighs, coos, grunts and gurgles (a step up — and a welcome one, at that — from crying on the communication ladder), the first steps to those first words. But it all starts with your baby's special wordless vocabulary, your little one's unique native language.

**When to expect it:** Your baby may begin vocalizing anytime between the first few weeks and the second month, progressing from random experimental sighs and coos to sounds that are actually directed at toys, pets, objects and people (like you, Mum and Dad). By 6 weeks to 3 months, most babies will have developed a personal repertoire of vowel sounds, cooing and gurgling.

**How to help your baby discover it:** As fun as it is to listen to your baby's monologue, it's even more fun to pick up the conversation by cooing, singing and talking back. Look into her eyes, bring your face close (remember, newborns are as nearsighted as Mr... Magoo). Matching coo-for-coo will be extraordinarily satisfying for her and will encourage the verbal explorations that will eventually (sooner than you think!) lead to that first meaningful "mama" or "dada."

There's no right or wrong way to talk to your baby; whether you're reading a book, chattering about the weather or describing what's in your aisle at the grocery store, your baby's language skills benefit. Babies love being talked to, and listening to your language cues and mimicking them back to you is how they learn to talk.

Not quite sure how best to start? Here are a few ideas for ways to talk to your baby that will help her vocalization skills grow — no high-pitched baby talk necessary (unless that's your style, in which case, go for it!)

## NARRATE YOUR DAY

Step by step. The simple act of describing what you're doing as you dress your baby, cook dinner or walk down the street will help your baby begin to recognize words, labels and sound combinations. "Let's pull on our coat to stay warm and cozy, and now our yellow mittens. And how about a fuzzy green hat?"

## HOLD (ONE-SIDED) CONVOS

Get into the habit now of talking to your little one, asking questions and supplying answers. Even though your baby won't understand exactly what you mean, she'll see you modelling the back-and-forth of conversation. "Do you know where we're going? To the bus stop! Here we go out the door. Do you think it will be chilly today? Brr, it's cold outside! Should we hurry to the warm bus? Let's walk fast."

## READ TO YOUR BABY

Whether it's *Big Red Barn* or *The Scarlet and the Black*, reading allows your baby to hear what sentences sound like.

## DESCRIBE THE SIGHTS & SOUNDS

Point out colours, objects and noises — from the garbage truck rumbling down the street to the bright red apples stacked in the produce aisle. "There's the sound of the wind in the trees, swish swish. And here comes the bus, look at the blue stripe on the side, and the bright lights."

## ASK QUESTIONS — & LISTEN IF SHE ANSWERS

Asking lots of questions is an easy way of modelling the give-and-take of conversation while keeping up a friendly patter. Remember to pause long enough to let your little one get a sound or a sigh in edgewise, though — and when she does vocalize, make a point to smile and make eye contact, to show her you're really listening. She'll be encouraged by your attention — and excited to try making some new sounds of her own.

## WHAT'S NEXT

By 3 1/2 months, most babies add laughing to their list of sound effects. Those little sounds will soon be followed by consonant sounds and babbling, which — with enough practice and encouragement from you — will eventually combine to create your cutie's first basic words. Keep in mind as always, your baby's personal vocal time line may vary.

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TODDLER



WAYS TO  
*Encourage*  
GOOD TODDLER  
BEHAVIOUR





Active listening is a tool for helping young children cope with their emotions. They tend to get frustrated a lot, especially if they can't express themselves well enough verbally. When you repeat back to them what you think they might be feeling, it helps to relieve some of their tension. It also makes them feel respected and comforted. It can diffuse many potential temper tantrums.

### KEEP PROMISES.

Stick to agreements. When you follow through on your promises, good or bad, your child learns to trust and respect you. So when you promise to go for a walk after she picks up her toys, make sure you have your walking shoes handy. When you say you will leave the library if she doesn't stop running around, be prepared to leave straight away. No need to make a fuss about it – the more matter of fact, the better. This helps your child feel more secure, because it creates a consistent and predictable environment.

### CHOOSE YOUR BATTLES.

Before you get involved in anything your child is doing – especially to say 'no' or 'stop' – ask yourself if it really matters. By keeping instructions, requests and negative feedback to a minimum, you create less opportunity for conflict and bad feelings. Rules are important, but use them only when it's really important.

### WHINING: BE STRONG.

Kids don't want to be annoying. By giving in when they're whining for something, we train them to do it more – even if we don't mean to. 'No' means 'no', not maybe, so don't say it unless you mean it. If you say 'no' and then give in, children will be whine even more the next time, hoping to get lucky again.

### MAKE YOUR CHILD FEEL IMPORTANT.

Children love it when they can contribute to the family. Start introducing some simple chores or things that she can do to play her own important part in helping the household. This will make her feel important and she'll take pride in helping out. If you can give your child lots of practice doing a chore, she will get better at it and will keep trying harder. Safe chores help children feel responsible, build their self-esteem and help you out too.

## MAINTAIN A SENSE OF HUMOUR

Another way of diffusing a possible conflict is to use humour and fun. You can pretend the menacing tickle monster makes animal noises. But humour at your child's expense won't help. Children are easily hurt by 'teasing'. Humour that has a laughing is great.

### CHILDREN DO AS YOU DO.

Your child watches you to get clues on how to behave in the world. You're her role model, so use your own behaviour to guide her. What you do is often much more important than what you say. If you want your child to say 'please', say it yourself. If you don't want your child to raise her voice, speak quietly and gently yourself.

### SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW YOU FEEL.

Tell him honestly how his behaviour affects you. This will help him see his her own feelings in yours, like a mirror. This is called empathy. By the age of three, children can show real



# ENSE JR.

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empathy. So you might say, 'I'm getting upset because there is so much noise I can't talk on the phone'. When you start the sentence with 'I', it gives your child the chance to see things from your perspective.

## CATCH HER BEING 'GOOD'

This simply means that when your child is behaving in a way you like, you can give her some positive feedback. For example, 'Wow, you are playing so nicely. I really like the way you are keeping all the blocks on the table'. This works better than waiting for the blocks to come crashing to the floor before you take notice and bark, 'Hey, stop that'. Try to say six positive comments (praise and encouragement) for every negative comment

(criticisms and reprimands). The 6-1 ratio keeps things in balance. Remember that if children have a choice only between no attention or negative attention, they will seek out negative attention.

## GET DOWN TO YOUR CHILD'S LEVEL

Kneeling or squatting down next to children is a very powerful tool for communicating positively with them. Getting close allows you to tune in to what they might be feeling or thinking. It also helps them focus on what you are saying or asking for. If you are close to your child and have his attention, there is no need to make him look at you.





# KEEP *The R* IN YOUR M AFTER HAVIN BY ELIZAB

My best model for a happy marriage was my own parents. They had been married close to 53 years when dad died last month. There are two things I remember most about their years together: they always knew how to laugh, and they made time to be together as a couple. My parents had a very active social life when I was growing up—they got together often with personal friends and also had regular date nights.

When my husband and I became parents, I swore we would follow their example. It was important to me that we make our marriage a priority and take time for ourselves. I wanted to have regular date

nights. But for us (as for many modern couples with kids), scheduling regular date nights has proven to be surprisingly difficult.

First of all, there is the challenge of finding a good baby sitter. For me, it's important there be some kind of personal connection with our sitter; I'm not comfortable having a complete stranger in our home caring for our child. But with aging parents, we could not count on family, and we don't have many teens in our neighbourhood. Then there's the problem of keeping a good baby sitter once you find her. We had a great baby sitter for a time; the daughter



A photograph of a man with a beard, wearing a striped shirt and shorts, standing on a path in a forest of tall, thin trees. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The man is looking towards the right, and his arms are slightly outstretched.

# PING *romance*

## MARRIAGE ING CHILDREN

ETH ROSS

of very close friends. She was wonderful, and our daughter loved her. Then she went off to college, and we had a difficult time finding someone to replace her. And even when we did, the person was rarely available when we needed her to be.

And then of course there's the cost of a baby sitter. Holy cow! I baby-sat for many years when I was younger, and was shocked to learn what a baby sitter earns today. The fact we were living on one income instead of two made it prohibitive.

Finally, there's the wages of fun: when we have managed to get out for the

occasional date night, we've learned come the next morning, there is a different price to pay, as our daughter inevitably wakes up earlier than usual.

Despite everything, I really believe the time together to reconnect and restrengthen our commitment to our marriage makes the inevitable hassle of planning a date night worth it. Even when things don't go exactly as planned.

A few months ago, we had plans to celebrate our seventh anniversary. We'd booked our new baby sitter. We'd made reservations at a favourite restaurant, and

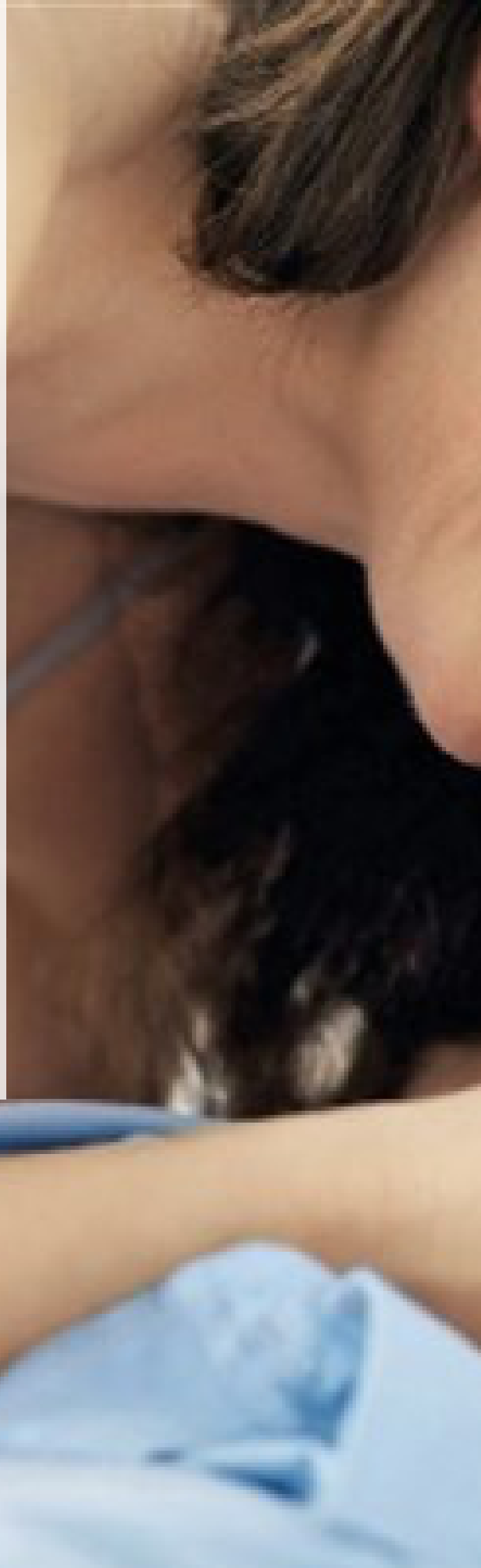


were also planning to check out a new microbrewery in town that was getting rave reviews. We were looking forward to it.

And then our daughter got sick. As I reluctantly called the sitter and restaurant to cancel, my husband remarked that this was the second year in a row we'd had to cancel our anniversary plans due to a sick child. That is marriage with children right there, isn't it?

Not to be deterred, I quickly planned a date night in. After all, it isn't the location that matters as much as the quality time together. I went to the grocery store and bought steaks, a nice bottle of wine and a special dessert. Set the dining room table with roses and candles. My husband put our daughter to bed while I cooked, and when he came downstairs, I had the music from our wedding reception playing.

We had a lovely time. The food was as delicious as any restaurant we could have gone to. And the setting more intimate. And fortunately for our date night, our daughter slept well through it all.





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*“my husband remarked that this was the second year in a row we’d had to cancel our anniversary plans due to a sick child.”*

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A rustic wooden Christmas tree cutout, a woven straw star, a red ribbon, and a gift box on a wooden background.

# LAST MINUTE *Gift* GUIDE

RUSHING TO GET ALL YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING DONE  
FOR THE KIDS? CHECK OUT OUR LAST MINUTE GIFTS FOR  
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# years 0-2



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years  
3-4



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years  
5-6



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years  
7-8



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# AUSTRALIAN *made* GIFTS

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At Handmade Cooperative, they're a little bit obsessed with handmade kids clothes and gifts.

Maybe you are too? Maybe you believe that there really is nothing better than handmade? Maybe you like the idea of having quality kids clothes and gifts that are made in the hands of talented Australians? Maybe you've got a kids room in need of a makeover that's fresh, unique and doesn't scream mass-produced by a huge corporation overseas?

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TODDLER



# FIVE *Tips* TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR A NEW BABY

Making the leap from a family of three to a family of four, or more, can be daunting for parents. You may be worried about how you will cope with the sleepless nights now that you have a toddler to look after as well. Or how, in the midst of those first few weeks, you will find the energy and time to properly care for your existing child, considering that last time you struggled to find the time to feed yourself.






Brother  
For Sale









Your biggest worry though, the one that keeps you awake at night, is how your first child will feel when the new baby arrives. How can you avoid feelings of resentment building up, or your eldest feeling left out? What steps can you take to lay the foundations for a loving and respectful sibling relationship? Here are five tips to prepare your child for a new baby:

### 1. INVOLVEMENT –

The first way to stop your child feeling left out is to actively involve him. This could include taking your child to midwife appointments, if practical, and accompanying you to antenatal scans. You could use a pregnancy week by week book to research the baby's development together each week. Towards the end of the pregnancy, you may like to get your child involved in choosing items for the nursery. The level of involvement will depend on your child's age.

### 2. BONDING –

Bonding with your bump is a great way to build a good relationship between siblings. Not only will it help him adjust to the idea of a sibling, it will help the baby to recognise his voice after the birth. Ask him to read or talk to the bump for a few minutes each day. If the baby has an active period during the day, you could try it then so that your child can feel the baby's kicks and movements responding to his voice.

### 3. COMMUNICATION –

Your child is likely to have a lot of questions about the new baby, including questions like “but how did it get in your tummy?” and, “how will it get out?”. Children are naturally inquisitive and love learning new things. Try to

answer the questions as honestly as you can, or you could research it together using age-appropriate books if you prefer.

### 4. HOSPITAL –

If you are planning to give birth in the hospital, the separation from you will be difficult for your child. Make sure your child will be looked after by someone he trusts and enjoys spending time with. Prepare him for the separation, and explain that they will be able to visit as soon as possible. Make sure your partner stays in contact with your child throughout the birth, to keep reassuring him that you and baby are both ok. Some children worry about their mother's safety during childbirth, and this can be quite stressful for them.

### 5. CARING –

Your child may not yet be old enough to help look after the baby, but they could help you while you look after the baby. Giving your child responsibilities, such as getting the baby wipes or massage oil, can be a great way to involve your child in the baby care. You could also buy your child a doll to take care of while you are busy with the baby. You will find that he copies what you are doing, and will probably sit quietly next to you, caring for his doll as you care for the baby. For a little while at least!





# Fast FOOD

CREATE MASTER MEALS USING  
OUR RECIPES THAT ARE KID  
FRIENDLY & CAN BE MADE WITH  
LITTLE OR NO EFFORT





# *chicken noodle* STIR-FRY



0.10 Prep

0.06 Cooking



6

Servings

## INGREDIENTS

900g hokkien noodles  
olive or canola oil spray  
400g chicken breast fillets, thinly sliced  
3 spring onions, sliced  
1 carrot, sliced  
1 red capsicum, sliced  
200g snow peas, halved  
400g baby corn, cut lengthways  
1/2 cup Sweet Chilli Sauce  
2 tbsp Fish Sauce  
2 tbsp lemon juice  
50g cashews

## METHOD

Place noodles in a large heat proof bowl and cover with boiling water.

Leave to stand for 2 minutes, gently using a wooden spoon to separate strands.

Drain well and set aside.

Spray a wok with oil and heat.

Add chicken and stir-fry in batches until browned and tender; set aside.

Add spring onion to the wok with 1 tablespoon water; stir-fry until tender.

Add vegetables and stir-fry until soft, then add noodles.

Add combined chilli sauce, fish sauce and lemon juice to wok and toss to coat noodles and vegetables.

Cook for 3 minutes or until heated through.

Return chicken to wok and cook for 2–3 minutes or until heated through.

Serve sprinkled with cashews.

*Chicken stir fry will always be a favourite in any household. The added cashews make it extra tasty.*





*christmas*

# ICE



1.20 Prep



32  
Pieces

## INGREDIENTS

300g (3 1/2 cups) desiccated coconut  
300g (2 cups) pure icing sugar, sifted  
Pinch of cream of tartar  
1 x 390g can sweetened condensed milk  
Red liquid food colouring  
Green liquid food colouring

## METHOD

Line the base and sides of a 19cm (base measurement) square cake pan with nonstick baking paper, allowing the sides to overhang.

Combine coconut, sugar and cream of tartar in a bowl. Stir in condensed milk. Divide among 2 bowls. Add a few drops of red food colouring to 1 bowl and stir to combine. Press into the prepared pan. Stir a few drops of green food colouring into remaining portion. Press over the base. Smooth the surface. Cover and place in the fridge for 1 hour or until set.

Use the overhanging baking paper to lift the slice from the pan. Use a sharp knife to cut the slice into 32 pieces.

*These snack recipes make  
the perfect gift for your  
kids to make*



# caramel POPCORN



0.05 Prep  
0.25 Cooking



10  
Servings

## INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup vegetable oil  
1/2 cup popping corn

Caramel  
125g butter, chopped  
3/4 cup white sugar  
2 tablespoons honey

## METHOD

Line a tray with baking paper. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add 2 pieces of popping corn. If corn slowly turns around in a circle then oil is hot enough.

Add remaining popping corn. Cover with a tight-fitting lid. When corn starts popping, shake saucepan gently. Remove from heat when corn stops popping. Transfer to a large

Make caramel: Combine butter, sugar and honey in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring, for 5 to 7 minutes or until sugar has dissolved. Bring mixture to the boil. Boil, uncovered, without stirring, for 5 to 8 minutes or until light golden.

Remove from heat. Stir in pecans. Pour caramel mixture over popcorn and stir until popcorn is coated. Spread over prepared tray. Set aside to cool. Break into pieces. Serve.

*Cook this up to eat  
while watching our  
Xmas Movie picks*





Nothing says Christmas like a glazed ham and this one is both quick and easy Perfect!

# quick glazed HAM



0.10 Prep  
0.30 Cooking



10  
Servings

## INGREDIENTS

1/2 leg ham  
20-30 whole cloves  
250g fine-cut marmalade  
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard  
1/4 cup (60ml) brandy  
1 teaspoon arrowroot

## METHOD

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Remove the skin only from the ham, trying not to remove any fat. Using a sharp knife, cut the fat into a crisscross pattern.

Place a whole clove into the centre of each diamond, pushing in well.

Put the marmalade, mustard and brandy in a saucepan over low heat, whisking gently until the marmalade dissolves. Continue to cook for a further 5-6 minutes or until the mixture is slightly reduced.

Mix the arrowroot with a little cold water, add to the glaze and cook for another 1-2 minutes, stirring until thick. Set aside for 15 minutes to cool.

Use a large pastry brush to brush the glaze all over the ham, making sure all the fat is covered.

Line a baking dish with baking paper, sit the ham in the dish and cook for 15 minutes. The edges should just be tinged golden. Remove and slice to serve warm or cold.

30 minute

# LAMB ROAST



0.05 Prep

0.25 Cooking



4

Servings

## INGREDIENTS

750g trim lamb mini topside roasts  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 bunch baby (Dutch) carrots, ends trimmed, washed  
1 x 400g pkt Baby Potatoes With Butter and Herbs  
5 sprigs fresh rosemary  
200g sugar snap peas  
60ml (1/4 cup) Mint Sauce  
375ml (1 1/2 cups) water  
40g (1/4 cup) Traditional-Flavoured Instant Gravy  
80ml (1/3 cup) red wine

## METHOD

Preheat oven to 220°C. Season the lamb with salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a roasting pan over high heat. Add the lamb and cook for 1 minute each side or until browned.

Arrange carrots, potatoes (including butter from the packet) and rosemary around the lamb. Roast for 20 minutes for medium or until cooked to your liking.

Meanwhile, cook the sugar snap peas in a small saucepan of boiling water for 2 minutes or until bright green and tender crisp. Drain and return to the pan. Add the mint sauce and stir until well combined. Whisk together the water and gravy in a jug.

Transfer the lamb and vegetables to a plate and cover with foil. Place the pan over high heat. Add the wine and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the gravy mixture and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute until the gravy thickens.

Divide the roast vegetables and sugar snap peas among serving plates. Thickly slice the lamb across the grain. Divide lamb among the plates and drizzle over the gravy to serve.

*I thought a full roast dinner with all the trimmings meant hours in the kitchen? Think again with this quick and versatile recipe.*



# Yoghurt POPS



0.10 Prep



8  
Servings

## INGREDIENTS

300g of fruit of choice, skin and seeds removed,  
coarsely chopped  
260g (1 cup) vanilla yoghurt

## METHOD

Place fruit in the bowl of a food processor and process until smooth. Transfer to a bowl. Add vanilla yoghurt and gently fold until mixture is just combined. Spoon the mango mixture evenly among eight 80ml (1/3-cup) capacity ice-block moulds.

Place in the freezer for 8 hours or until firm.

*Looking for a healthier  
alternative to ice cream  
Try these fresh fruit  
yoghurt pops everyone  
will love*



# Quick Mix BROWNIES



0.20 Prep

0.40 Cooking



24

Servings

## INGREDIENTS

### *Equipment*

You'll need a 1.5 litre glass jar.

### *Jar ingredients*

1 1/2 cups plain flour

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 cup cocoa powder, sifted

1 1/2 cups caster sugar

2 cups dark choc bits

1 cup vanilla and strawberry mini marshmallows

### *Extra ingredients for making brownies*

200g butter, chopped

3 eggs, lightly beaten

Vanilla ice-cream and strawberries, to serve

## METHOD

Sift flour and baking powder into a bowl. Spoon mixture into jar. Top with cocoa and then sugar. Top with choc bits, then marshmallows. Seal jar. Make a label with recipe steps 2 to 4. Attach to jar (see box, above). Give to mum.

Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Grease a 3cm-deep, 20cm x 30cm (base) lamington pan. Line base and sides with baking paper, allowing a 2cm overhang at long ends.

Place butter in a large, microwave-safe bowl. Microwave, uncovered, for 1 to 2 minutes on medium (50%) or until butter has melted. Set aside for 15 minutes to cool.

Add eggs to butter. Stir to combine. Slowly add ingredients from jar. Stir to combine. Spread mixture into prepared pan. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out with crumbs clinging. Set aside to cool.

Cut into squares. Serve with ice-cream and strawberries.



*Get the kids involved in making this for a gift*



FAMILY  
FUN







# Movie NIGHT

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STAYING IN? GRAB THE POPCORN  
AND GET COSY WITH OUR PICK  
OF CHRISTMAS MOVIES TO WATCH  
WITH THE FAMILY

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## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Though London awaits the joyful arrival of Christmas, miserly Ebenezer Scrooge (Jim Carrey) thinks it's all humbug, berating his faithful clerk and cheerful nephew for their view. Later, Scrooge encounters the ghost of his late business partner, who warns that three spirits will visit him this night. The ghosts take Scrooge on a journey through his past, present and future in the hope of transforming his bitterness.



## MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET

Six-year-old Susan Walker (Mara Wilson) is sceptical of the Christmas myth surrounding Santa Claus, a trait she perhaps learned from her mother, Dorey (Elizabeth Perkins). When tasked with hiring the Santa who will pose with kids at Macy's, Dorey enlists a man with the curious name of Kris Kringle (Richard Attenborough) who claims to be Santa himself. His assertions are met with scoffs and threats of institutionalization, but a young lawyer, along with Susan and Dorey, comes to his defence.



## ARTHUR CHRISTMAS

Everyone knows that, each Christmas, Santa Claus delivers presents to every last child on Earth. What everyone doesn't know is that Santa accomplishes the feat with a very high-tech operation beneath the North Pole. But when the unthinkable happens, and Santa misses one child out of hundreds of millions, someone has to save the day. It's up to Arthur (James McAvoy), Santa's youngest son, to deliver a present to the forgotten tyke before Christmas morning dawns.



## THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS

The film follows the misadventures of Jack Skellington, Halloweentown's beloved pumpkin king, who has become bored with the same annual routine of frightening people in the "real world." When Jack accidentally stumbles on Christmastown, all bright colours and warm spirits, he gets a new lease on life -- he plots to bring Christmas under his control by kidnapping Santa Claus and taking over the role. But Jack soon discovers even the best-laid plans of mice and skeleton men can go seriously awry.



## MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL

The Muppets perform the classic Dickens holiday tale, with Kermit the Frog playing Ebenezer Scrooge (Michael Caine). Other Muppet characters like Miss Piggy, Gonzo, Fozzie Bear and Santa Claus -- weave in and out of the story. Scrooge receives visits from spirits of Christmas -- past, present and future -- who show him the error of his self-serving ways. The miserable old man seems to be past the hope of redemption and happiness.



## DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS

In this live-action adaptation of the beloved children's tale by Dr. Seuss, the reclusive Grinch (Jim Carrey) decides to ruin Christmas for the cheery citizens of Whoville. Reluctantly joined by his hapless dog, Max, the Grinch comes down from his mountaintop lair and sneaks into town to swipe everything holiday-related from the Whos. However, the bitter grump finds a hitch in his plans when he encounters the endearing Cindy Lou Who (Taylor Momsen).



## THE SANTA CLAUSE

Divorced dad Scott (Tim Allen) has custody of his son (Eric Lloyd) on Christmas Eve. After he accidentally kills a man in a Santa suit, they are magically transported to the North Pole, where an elf explains that Scott must take Santa's place before the next Christmas arrives. Scott thinks he's dreaming, but over the next several months he gains weight and grows an inexplicable white beard. Maybe that night at the North Pole wasn't a dream after all -- and maybe Scott has a lot of work to do.

MOVIE MARATHON - WATCH BACK-TO-BACK WITH SANTA CLAUSE 2 AND 3



## MERRY MADAGASCAR

The Zoosters are back in an all-new holiday adventure. When Santa and his reindeer crash onto the island of Madagascar it's up to Alex, Marty, Gloria, Melman and those wild penguins to save Christmas. Get ready for a sleigh full of laughs in this hilarious holiday classic.

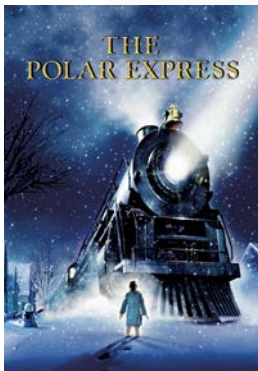




## HOME ALONE

When bratty 8-year-old Kevin McCallister (Macaulay Culkin) acts out the night before a family trip to Paris, his mother (Catherine O'Hara) makes him sleep in the attic. After the McCallisters mistakenly leave for the airport without Kevin, he awakens to an empty house and assumes his wish to have no family has come true. But his excitement sours when he realizes that two con men (Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern) plan to rob the McCallister residence, and that he alone must protect the family home.

MOVIE MARATHON - WATCH BACK-TO-BACK WITH HOME ALONE 2, 3 AND 4!



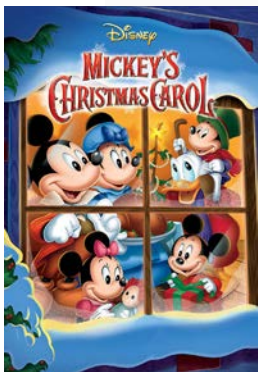
## POLAR EXPRESS

Tom Hanks and director Robert Zemeckis ("Forrest Gump"; "Cast Away") reunite for "Polar Express," an inspiring adventure based on the beloved children's book by Chris Van Allsburg. When a doubting young boy takes an extraordinary train ride to the North Pole, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery that shows him that the wonder of life never fades for those who believe.



## ELF

Buddy (Will Ferrell) was accidentally transported to the North Pole as a toddler and raised to adulthood among Santa's elves. Unable to shake the feeling that he doesn't fit in, the adult Buddy travels to New York, in full elf uniform, in search of his real father. As it happens, this is Walter Hobbs (James Caan), a cynical businessman. After a DNA test proves this, Walter reluctantly attempts to start a relationship with the childlike Buddy with increasingly chaotic results.



## MICKEY'S ONCE UPON A CHRISTMAS

A Christmas themed, three-part anthology-style video. The first part, "Donald Duck: Stuck on Christmas", is essentially a retelling of Groundhog Day (1993), with Huey, Dewey, and Louie reliving Christmas ad infinitum. Next is "A Very Goofy Christmas", in which Goofy tries to overcome his son's scepticism about Santa Claus. Finally, "Mickey & Minnie's Gift Of The Magi" recreate the classic tale of ironic Christmas selflessness. The stories are linked together by narration by Kelsey Grammer.

MOVIE MARATHON - WATCH BACK-TO-BACK WITH MICKEY'S TWICE UPON A CHRISTMAS







FAMILY



# Grandparents raising kids

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THE REWARDS AND CHALLENGES  
OF PARENTING THE  
SECOND TIME AROUND

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### IMPROVING EMOTIONAL HEALTH

When parents are absent or unable to raise their children, grandparents are often the ones who step in. Raising a second generation brings many rewards, including the fulfillment of giving your grandkids a sense of security, developing a deeper relationship, and keeping the family together. It also comes with many challenges. No matter how much you love your grandkids, taking them into your home requires major adjustments. But with the right guidelines and support, you can roll back the years and make a real difference in the lives of your grandchildren.

### ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR FEELINGS

The prospect of raising grandchildren is bound to trigger a range of emotions. Positive emotions, like the love you feel for your grandchildren, the joy in seeing them learn and grow, and relief at giving them a stable environment, are easy to acknowledge. It's more difficult to admit to feelings such as resentment, guilt, or fear. It's important to acknowledge and accept what you're feeling, both good and bad.

Don't beat yourself up over your doubts and misgivings. It's only natural to feel some ambivalence about childrearing at a time when you expected your responsibilities to be dwindling. These feelings don't mean that you don't love your grandchildren.

### WHAT YOU MAY FEEL

**Stress and worry** – If you've been used to the occasional visit from a grandchild, being back in the saddle full time can feel stressful and overwhelming. You may worry about how you will handle the additional responsibilities and what will happen to the grandkids if something happens to you.

**Anger or resentment** – You may feel anger or resentment toward the grandchild's parents for leaving you with the responsibility of caring for their child. Or you might be resentful of other friends who are enjoying the retirement you once envisioned.

**Guilt** – You may feel guilty and responsible for your child's failures as a parent, second-guessing and regretting your own mistakes when you were first parenting.



Grief – There are many losses that come with taking in your grandkids, including the loss of your independence and the easier role of “grandparent,” rather than the primary caregiver. You may also be grieving for your child and the difficulties that have led to this situation.

When you start to feel overwhelmed... Remember that while you may not have the energy you did when you were younger, you do have the wisdom that only comes with experience—an advantage that can make a huge difference in your grandchild’s life. Unlike first-time parents, you’ve done this before and learned from your mistakes. Don’t underestimate what you have to offer!

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

You probably weren’t expecting to be raising kids again at this stage in your life. At times, the physical, emotional, and financial demands may feel overwhelming. That’s why it’s vitally important that you take care of yourself and get the support you need. When you’re preoccupied with the daily demands of raising grandkids, it’s easy to let your own needs fall by the wayside. But taking care of yourself is a necessity, not a luxury. You can’t be a good caretaker when you’re overwhelmed, exhausted, and emotionally depleted. In order to keep up with your grandkids, you need to be calm, centred, and focused. Looking after your own mental and physical health is how you get there.

A healthy you means healthy grandchildren. If you don’t take care of your health, you won’t be able to take care of your grandchildren, either. Make it a priority to eat nutritious meals, exercise regularly, and get adequate sleep. Don’t let doctor’s appointments or medication refills slide.

Hobbies and relaxation are not luxuries. Carving out time for rest and relaxation is essential to avoid burnout and depression. Use your “me time to really nurture yourself. Choose activities that indulge your senses. Zoning out in front of the TV won’t revive you.

It’s okay to lean on your grandkids for help. Kids are smarter and more capable than we often give them credit for. Even young children can pick up after themselves and help out around the house. Helping out will also make your grandkids feel good. Support makes all the difference. Find someone you can talk to about what you’re going through. This will give you a chance to work through your feelings and come to an acceptance of the situation. If you deny or ignore these feelings, they will come out in other ways and may affect your relationship with your grandkids. Look for support groups for grandparents raising grandchildren. Support groups or even phone support can be very helpful in this journey, and it’s a good start for making friends in similar situations. Hearing from people who have been there can help both uplift your spirits and give you concrete suggestions for your situation.

Reach out in your community for childcare help. If you are a member of a church, synagogue or other religious organization, you may be able to ask around for available baby-sitters. Try library storytime hours, chatting up other parents at the playground, or seeing if your neighbours have a reliable teen available to babysit or if any parents are interested in a babysitting swap.

Connect with parents with children. Even if you feel like you are from a different generation, the joys and tribulations of raising children can quickly form common bonds. It may take time, but forging friendships with parents with similar aged children can offer camaraderie and help on navigating the maze of issues facing children today. Your grandkids will have mixed feelings too.

Moving to a new home is never easy, even in the best of circumstances. When children are dealing with the loss of regular contact with their parent or parents, the move is even harder. It will take some time for your grandchildren to adjust, and in the meantime, they may act especially contrary and difficult. And if the children have suffered from emotional neglect, trauma, or abuse,



those wounds will not disappear just because they are now in a safe place. They will need time to heal.

Your grandkids may resent being separated from their parent and wish to return, even if their home situation was dangerous or abusive. Don't take this personally. The parent-child bond is powerful. Even if the children are old enough to understand that they're better off with you, they will still miss their parent and struggle with feelings of abandonment.

Your grandkids' feelings may come out in many ways, including behaviour. They may lash out with aggressive or inappropriate behaviour, or they may withdraw and push you away.

No matter their behaviour, your grandkids need your comfort and support. If you start to get angry or upset, put yourself in their head. Picture what they've been through, and the confusion, mistrust, and fear they're probably feeling. Remember that children often act out in a safe place. While it may feel like your grandchildren don't love or appreciate you sometimes, their behaviour actually means they feel safe enough to express frightening emotions.

When grandkids first arrive, they may be on their best behaviour. Don't be too discouraged if, after a brief "honeymoon" phase, they start to act out. This doesn't necessarily mean you're doing a bad job. As mentioned previously, this can be a sign that they finally feel secure enough to vent their true feelings.

### GRANDMOTHER AND BABY

While it will take your grandkids time to adjust to their new living arrangement, there are things you can do to make the transition easier. Above all, your grandchildren need to feel secure. Children thrive in an environment that is stable and predictable.

Establish a routine. Routines and schedules help make a child's world feel safe. Set a schedule for mealtimes and bedtimes. Create special rituals that you and your grandchildren can share on weekends or when getting ready for bed.

Encourage their input in their new home. Let your grandkids help pack and move in their things to the extent that they're able for their age. Encourage them to decorate their new room and arrange things as they'd like. Having some control will make the adjustment easier.

Set up clear, age-appropriate house rules and enforce them consistently. Children feel more secure when they know what to expect. Loving boundaries tell the child he or she is safe and protected.

Make sure that each grandchild has a private space. If grandchildren are sharing a bedroom, get creative: use a divider to partition off a private area in a bigger room, erect a playhouse in the backyard, or set up a tent in the family room.

Offer your time and attention. You can be a consistent, reassuring presence for your grandkids. Try to make time to interact with them at the beginning of the day, when they come home from school, and before bed.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN AND HONEST COMMUNICATION

Communicating openly and honestly with your grandchildren is one of the best things you can do to help them cope with their new situation. It's especially important to take the time to really listen to your grandkids. In this difficult time, they need an adult they can go to with their questions, concerns, and feelings.

Help your grandkids learn to identify their emotions. For example, if your grandchild seems upset, you might say, "You look sad. Is something bothering you?" Young children communicate through play. Young children may not be able to verbalize



“

*Plan regular times when you sit and talk to each other, free from TV, games, or other distractions. Encourage your grandchildren to talk about their feelings, both good and bad. Try to listen without judging or dismissing their feelings.*

”







how they feel, but will express themselves through their play.

It's okay to say, "I don't know." You don't have to have an answer for everything. If you don't know when mummy's coming home, for example, be honest about it. Don't evade the question or lie.

### HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU TELL YOUNG GRANDCHILDREN?

When deciding what to tell your grandchildren about the situation, it's important to consider their age and developmental skills. The following tips may help:

Avoid telling the child too much. Many children are simply too young to understand the whole story. When grandparents tell a young child all of the details of the situation, they may be doing more harm than good. Too much information can be confusing,

scary, and overwhelming for the child.

Avoid telling the child too little or nothing at all. Kids are smart. They will pick up tidbits about their situation, even if the details are not discussed directly. If children learn about what's going on from someone else, they could feel hurt, deceived, and confused. They may avoid asking you questions or talking to you about other important concerns because they think certain topics are "off limits."

Never twist the facts or lie to the child. Even very young children know the difference between the truth and a lie. They often piece together information, but then are afraid to talk about the truth. Some people may twist the facts in an effort to protect the child. But that approach often backfires. When children are told untruths about the situation, they may become very confused, angry, and hurt. The best strategy is to be honest with your grandchildren, at their level of understanding. Your grandchildren will learn the importance



of trust and honesty in relationships.  
Source: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren,  
University of Wisconsin-Extension

## ENCOURAGE CONTACT WITH PARENTS

It is not always possible for children to remain in contact with their parents, and at times, it may not be in a child's best interest. But in general, it is good for your grandchildren to maintain relationships with their parents, especially if they may live with them again. If meeting in person isn't possible, you can encourage contact in other ways, including phone calls, cards and letters, and email.

## MAKING VISITS WITH PARENTS AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE

Don't put your grandchild in the middle. Try to set aside any feelings of anger or disappointment you have toward your grandchild's parent. Avoid venting issues or saying critical things about the parent in front of your grandchild. And don't make your grandchild feel guilty about spending time with their parent. This can be confusing and distressing for the child.

Communicate and cooperate with your grandchild's parent. Do what you can to smooth the relationship and make the parent feel a part of the child's life. Share information about the child's school, hobbies, and friends. Make sure the parent has the child's schedule and contact information.

Make visits part of your grandchild's routine. Contact with parents will be less stressful for children if they know what to expect. If possible, plan visits well in advance and put them on a regular schedule. Talk with the parent ahead of time, so everyone's expectations for the visit are clear. It's best if both parents and grandparents enforce the same rules.

Be sensitive to your grandchild's feelings. It's important to talk with your grandchild

about he or she feels about parental contact. Even when kids are looking forward to a visit or call, it can bring up many feelings, including uncertainty and nervousness.

Kids may worry that their parent doesn't love them anymore, or that they won't have anything to talk about. Be there to reassure them.

Help your grandchild deal with disappointment. Sometimes, visits don't go well or the parent doesn't show up. Vent to a friend if you need to, but avoid the temptation to say angry or hurtful things about the parent in front of your grandchild, as this won't make him or her feel better. Instead, talk with your grandchild about what happened and how they feel about it.





PREGNANCY



# RUNNING DURING *Pregnancy*

IF YOU WERE ALREADY LOGGING KM'S, YOU DON'T HAVE TO STOP RUNNING DURING PREGNANCY. HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO STAY SAFE.







## INVEST IN NEW RUNNING SHOES.

Keep in mind that certain pregnancy hormones increase the laxity of your ligaments, which can lead to you being more prone to sprains and strains if you do slip or stumble. And with looser joints and the extra pregnancy weight, running can be hard on your knees. That means well-fitted sneakers are extra important to get the extra support you need around your arches and ankles. If you're not sure what's best for you, go to a speciality running store.



## DON'T FORGET TO STRENGTHEN.

You're more prone to injury and carrying more weight when you're expecting — so make sure to regularly fit in pregnancy-safe abdominal exercises and lower-body strengthening moves (squats, lunges, pelvic lifts/tilts). Strong muscles help protect your joints.

## FUEL UP.

Beginning with the second trimester, you need an extra 300 calories per day to fuel your pregnancy, regardless of your workouts. And if you're active, you'll need even more! With this in mind, consult your doctor about specific caloric needs for your weight and activity level.



ve you  
gnancy  
ensure you  
u, get fitted



## BE AWARE OF YOUR BODY

Watch for pelvic or abdominal discomfort. As you progress to the second and third trimester, running can be hard on the muscles in your pelvic floor, your core and your ab's. And as your body adapts to a growing baby, it becomes more vulnerable to injury and other complications. On that note, if you do begin to feel pelvic pressure from the weight of your belly while you're running, a maternity support belt or an abdominal splint/abdominal binder can help alleviate discomfort, prevent (or limit) the widening of diastasis recti, help keep your body in neutral alignment and take the pressure off of the abdominal connective tissue. The downside: The extra material could cause you to heat up more quickly than usual — in which case, slow down to cool down.



u'll need about  
pregnancy —  
're exercising,  
d, ask your doctor  
eight and activity

## BE KIND TO YOURSELF.

Remember, too, that you may tire more easily than you did before you started running for two. During the first trimester, fatigue, morning sickness, nausea, constipation or frequent urination could interfere with your regular running habits.

And in the second and third trimesters, weight gain and physical discomforts come into play. So don't get discouraged if you need to adjust the length of your workouts, incorporate walking intervals or scale back on long-distance runs.







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OF THE  
MONTH



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